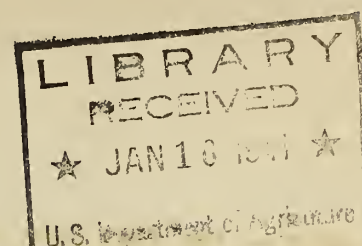


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THE DECEMBER PIG CROP REPORT

Broadcast Monday, December 23, 1940, by C. L. Harlan, Agricultural Marketing Service, in the Department of Agriculture period. National Farm and Home Hour over the NBC Blue network of the National Broadcasting Company.

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KADDERLY:

At Noon today -- less than an hour ago -- the Department of Agriculture issued its December pig crop report. The first such report was issued in 1922. They are now released in June and December of each year....giving information on the number of pigs farmers intend to raise during the coming six months as compared with past hog production.

The man responsible for assembling and getting out this report is here in the studio....Mr. C. L. Harlan of the Agricultural Marketing Service.

The principal items in this December pig crop report are based on information supplied by 160 thousand farmers....in all parts of the country....through the cooperation of the rural mail carriers of the Post Office Department who distribute the questionnaires, pick them up and send them in.

Now....Mr. Harlan, let's look at the report that you have prepared from these 160 thousand returns.

HARLAN:

All right, Mr. Kadderly.

First of all, I want to say that this report is of more than the usual interest to hog producers.

KADDERLY:

In what way?

HARLAN:

Well, it shows definitely that hog producers are dissatisfied with the low prices they've been getting for their hogs during the past year and a half. Proof of this is shown by the fact that these men have not only been raising fewer hogs, but plan to raise an even smaller number next year.

KADDERLY:

Low prices the past year and a half have resulted in smaller pig crops this year, and you say farmers are planning to raise fewer pigs next year. Just how great are these reductions?

HARLAN:

The spring pig crop this year was estimated at 9 percent smaller than last

(over)

year -- the fall crop 12 and half percent smaller. The combined spring and fall pig crop in 1940 was down about 10 percent.

Now, looking at 1941....it's expected that 14 percent fewer sows will farrow this next spring than farrowed last spring.

KADDERLY:

Mr. Harlan...in comparing the reduction in the 1940 pig crop as compared with 1939 we should keep in mind that the 1939 pig crop was one of the largest ever raised.

HARLAN:

That's true. Compared with other recent years the 1940 pig crop was the largest since 1933, and 8 percent larger than the average of the 10 years 1929 to 1938. Those years, of course, include the very small crops of the severe drought period.

KADDERLY:

Well, how does the 1940 pig crop compare with the years before the severe droughts cut down hog production?

HARLAN:

It's a little smaller than the average of the 10 pre-drought years -- 1925 to 34.

KADDERLY:

1940 pig crop smaller than the average of the 10 pre-drought years.

HARLAN:

Yes, and a further sharp reduction is in prospect for 1941. As I said before, breeding intentions reported by farmers point to 14 percent fewer litters in 1941 than last spring. If such a reduction is carried out, hog production will drop back to about the lowest level in nearly 20 years -- excluding the severe drought period.

KADDERLY:

Now, let's have a few details from the report itself....some of the figures.

HARLAN:

The fall pig crop this year is estimated at about 28 and a half million head -- down about 4 million from last year.

KADDERLY:

Was this general all over the country?

HARLAN:

Yes it was...but the decrease was relatively larger in regions outside the Corn Belt than in that area. The decrease was largest in the Southern States.

The number of litters this fall was about as indicated in the June pig report. The average number of pigs saved per litter this past fall season was 6 and a third -- that's a little larger than a year ago and the largest for any fall on record.

KADDERLY:

Now, look at next spring....

HARLAN:

All right...only about 7 million sows are expected to farrow in the spring season in 1941 -- that's more than a million less than the number farrowed this past spring. Such a number would be much below any other spring season since 1923 except in the years from 1934 to 1938....when farrowings were small as a result of the droughts.

This indicated number is based on breeding intentions reported about December first, and the relationship between breeding intentions and subsequent farrowings in other years -- when prices of hogs were relatively low and the hog-corn ratio unfavorable for hog production. If hog prices should advance substantially in the next 40 days and if the hog-corn ratio becomes favorable, it would be possible for many farmers to increase their spring litters above present intentions. If this happens, the decrease in farrowings next spring would be less than now seems probable.

KADDERLY:

Fewer pigs this year than last, and indications for still fewer pigs next spring -- but with the possibility that farmers may raise more pigs than they planned on the first of this month.

HARLAN:

Right....and in finishing this report, I wish again to express our appreciation for the cooperation of the farmers who filled out the livestock cards, and to the rural carriers who distributed and collected them -- and to wish them and all Farm and Home Hour listeners a very merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.

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